

What is claimed is:

1. An isolated antibody or antibody fragment which selectively binds human thymosin  $\beta$ 15.
2. The antibody fragment of claim 1, wherein said fragment is a Fab, Fab', F(ab')2 or Fv fragment.
3. The antibody of claim 1, wherein said antibody is a single chain antibody.
4. The antibody of claim 1, wherein said antibody is humanized.
5. The antibody or antibody fragment of claim 1, wherein said antibody or antibody fragment is detectably labelled.
6. An isolated and purified human thymosin  $\beta$ 15 having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO.: 2.
7. An isolated and purified polypeptide comprising a peptide selected from the group consisting of amino acid 7 to 12 of SEQ ID NO: 2, amino acid 21 to 24 of SEQ ID NO: 2 and amino acid 36 to 45 of SEQ ID NO: 2.
8. An isolated polynucleotide encoding human thymosin  $\beta$ 15 comprising the amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO:2.
9. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide comprising a peptide selected from the group consisting of amino acid 7 to 12 of

SEQ ID NO: 2, amino acid 21 to 24 of SEQ ID NO: 2 and amino acid 39 to 44 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

10. The polynucleotide of claims 8 or 9 wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.

11. The polynucleotide of claims 8 or 9 wherein the polynucleotide is cDNA.

12. The polynucleotide of claims 8 or 9 wherein the polynucleotide is RNA.

13. An isolated polynucleotide having the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, or the complement thereto.

14. An isolated polynucleotide encoding human thymosin  $\beta$ 15 having the nucleotide sequence of nucleotides 98-232 of SEQ ID NO:1, or the complement thereto.

15. A recombinant vector containing the DNA of claim 13 or 14.

16. A host cell containing the vector of claim 15.

17. A method of treating a neoplastic cell expressing human thymosin  $\beta$ 15 comprising, administering to the cell an effective amount of a compound which suppresses the activity or production of the human thymosin  $\beta$ 15.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the compound interferes with the expression of the human thymosin  $\beta$ 15 gene.
19. The method of claim 18, wherein expression of the gene is inhibited by administering antisense oligonucleotides.
20. The method of claim 17, wherein the compound is an antibody or fragment thereof or a single chain antibody.
21. An isolated nucleotide segment comprising at least 10 nucleotides and hybridizes under stringent conditions to a DNA fragment having the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.